

Message Text

SECRET

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13

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-06 ISO-00 FEA-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 SAB-01 EB-07 OMB-01

TRSE-00 /083 W

----- 060217

R 040943Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2299

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SANAA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 0032

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, XF, SA

SUBJECT: ATTACKS ON KING FEISAL BY OTHER ARABS: SAUDI CONCERNS

REF: JIDDA 7595

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1. SARG HAS LONG BEEN ARDENT SUPPORTER OF ARAB SOLIDARITY

AND FOR AT LEAST PAST YEAR HAS NOT PERMITTED CRITICISM
OF OTHER ARAB LEADERS IN ITS PUBLIC MEDIA.

2. REGARDING SYRIANS' PRIVATE VIEWS OF KING FEISAL, OUR
IMPRESSION IS THAT EVEN THOSE WHO REGARD HIM AS A POLITICAL
REACTIONARY ACKNOWLEDGE HE HAS BECOME
ONE OF THE WORLD'S MORE INFLUENTIAL POLITICAL LEADERS
AND ACCORDINGLY VITAL ALLY IN SYRIA'S CONFRONTATION WITH ISRAEL.
SYRIANS GIVE DUE CREDIT TO KING FOR HIS ROLE IN OIL BOYCOTT AND
IMPORTANCE IT PLAYED IN CHANGING WORLD ATTITUDES TOWARD ARAB
CAUSE. SARG REGULARLY REITERATES VALUE OF THIS WEAPON AND CALLS
ON ARAB STATES TO BE PREPARED TO REINSTATE BOYCOTT SHOULD THAT
PROVE NECESSARY TO COMPEL ISRAEL MAKE FULL WITHDRAWAL FROM
TERRITORIES OCCUPIED IN 1967.

2. SYRIANS FULLY APPRECIATE IMPORTANCE OF SAUDI MONEY
AS BACKING SYRIAN MILITARY EFFORT. TWO STUDENTS TALKING
WITH EMBOFF THIS WEEK EXPRESSED VIEW THAT BREZHNEV'S
VISIT CANCELLATION WAS NOT OVERLY SERIOUS MATTER INASMUCH AS
FEISAL VISIT STILL ON, "AND, AFTER ALL, HE PAYS FOR SOVIET ARMS."
IN GENERAL, SYRIANS BELIEVE FEISAL HAS BEEN GENEROUS TO SYRIA.
WE HAVE HEARD NO PRIVATE DEROGATORY REMARKS EITHER
THAT SAUDI PAYMENTS TO SYRIA HAVE BEEN TOO SMALL OR THAT SUMS
CAME WITH STRINGS ATTACHED.

3. SYRIANS WILL BE CAREFUL TO AVOID ANY CRITICISM OF
FEISAL NOT ONLY TO PRESERVE CLOSE DIPLOMATIC AND
ECONOMIC SUPPORT FROM SAUDI ARABIA, BUT ALSO PERHAPS BECAUSE
CRITICISM OF KING'S "COOPERATION" WITH US COULD
BOOMERANG AGAINST POLICY OF CURRENT SYRIAN LEADERSHIP
WHICH HAS MOVED IN SIMILAR DIRECTION DURING PAST YEAR--
SIGNING DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT, RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF
RELATIONS, PL-480 AGREEMENT AND SOON-EXPECTED AID PROGRAM.

4. SARG WILL GIVE KING FEISAL WARM WELCOME DURING HIS
STATE VISIT LATER THIS MONTH. ONE MAJOR TOPIC OF DIS-
CUSSION WILL, NO DOUBT, BE FUTURE MOVES ON ARAB-ISRAELI
QUESTION. SYRIANS WILL PROBABLY USE OPPORTUNITY OF VISIT
TO EMPHASIZE TO KING THAT SYRIA MUST NOT BE
ISOLATED AS PEACE EFFORTS MOVE FORWARD; SYRIANS WILL
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LIKELY AIM AT WINNING FEISAL'S ASSURANCE THAT
HE WILL REIMPOSE OIL BOYCOTT SHOULD THAT PROVE NECESSARY.
MURPHY

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NNN

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